

The **NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY** is the central fire service agency in the State and is responsible for the development and enforcement of the State Uniform Fire Code, public fire safety education programs and firefighter training programs. It is housed within the State's Department of Community Affairs.

For more information on fire safety, visit the Division's Web site at:

www.nj.gov/dca/dfs

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
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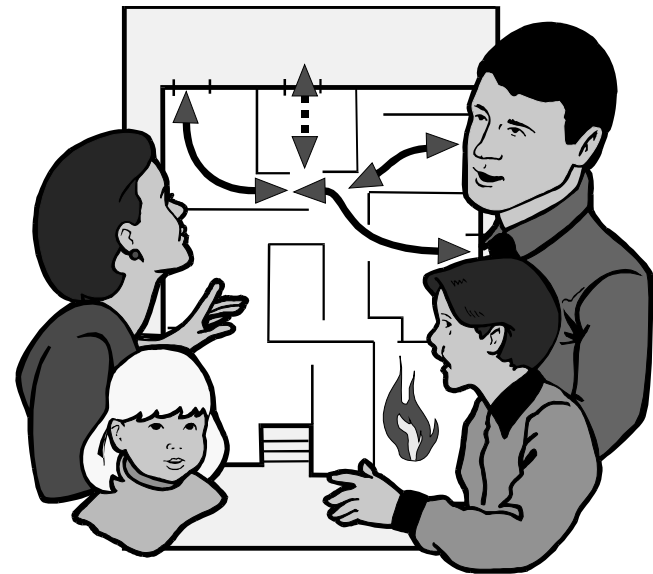
**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**



Exit Drills In The Home

(EDITH)

CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!



James E. McGreevey
Governor
State of
New Jersey



Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner
Department of
Community Affairs

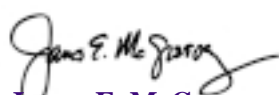


Lawrence Petrillo
*State Fire Marshal
and Director*
Division of Fire Safety

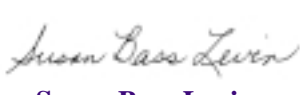
***Greetings from
Governor McGreevey, Commissioner Levin,
and Fire Marshal Petrillo***

Fires are always unexpected, but they can and do happen at any time. In 2001, fires killed 3,745 civilians in America - more than all natural disasters combined! And once they start, fires spread very rapidly. In most cases, the amount of time you have available to escape is no more than 3 to 10 minutes after the start of the fire, and even less if the fire started before you became aware of it. In a fire emergency, you have to know how to get your family members out of the house as quickly and safely as possible. This means you have to develop and practice an escape plan, **EDITH**, which stands for **Exit Drills In The Home!** By developing and practicing escapes with all the members of your family, you'll be well-prepared if you ever have a real fire!

With all good wishes,



James E. McGreevey
Governor



Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner



Lawrence Petrillo
State Fire Marshal

PLAN YOUR ESCAPE!

Before you start to develop your escape plan, sit down with all the members of your family and talk about what you are about to do. Make sure that everyone, especially the children, understand why an escape plan is necessary: because fire is dangerous, that it can strike at any time, and if it does, that everyone has to get out of the house fast and not go back inside for any reason! Explain how your smoke detector works and sound its alarm so that everyone is familiar with it. Then, on a sheet of paper, draw a diagram of each floor of your home and indicate two ways of escaping from every room. It's necessary to know two ways out of



each room in case your main escape route happens to be blocked by fire. Consider using windows as means of escape if necessary. If your bedrooms are above ground level, you may want to consider investing in one or more portable rope ladders to use in an emergency escape. But if you do get them, make sure you practice using them. You don't want to wait until you have a real fire emergency to try to use a rope ladder for the first time! Next, select one specific location outside your home to be your meeting place - a location for all family members to group together and be accounted for after exiting from the house. Preferably, it should be in front of the home. The call to your fire department for help should be made from a nearby neighbor's home, or from a cell phone if one is available.



OTHER SAFETY TIPS:

- * It's important to remember that at the first sign of fire, everyone should get out and not go back inside for any reason, such as to try to save pets or personal possessions. Many people have lost their lives when they went back inside their burning homes. If anyone is trapped inside a burning home, trained firefighters wearing protective gear have the best chance of rescuing them successfully.
- * Check your windows to make sure they can be unlocked and opened quickly in case of an emergency.
- * Children sometimes instinctively try to "hide" from fire in a closet or a bedroom. Make sure they understand that they can't hide from fire, and that they have to get out of the house to be safe from fire.
- * The best safety policy of all is to take the necessary steps to prevent fire from starting in the first place. Practice basic fire safety measures, such as keeping matches and lighters out of the reach of children; testing your smoke detectors at least once a month and replacing the batteries at least once each year to make sure they are working properly; being extremely careful when using space heaters and candles; cooking safely and keeping combustible materials away from heat sources; being careful while smoking; and keeping a screen over the front of your fireplace.